Japan and Korea as a Source of Media and Cultural Capital

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ABSTRACT

Japan and Korea have made significant growth in cultural exchange from 1980 up to the present. The regional economic growth has enhanced the cultural flow between the media industries of the two countries continue to play a major role in consolidating a new regional social network. This paper examines the government regulations and cultural threads, which have led to the increase in cultural exchange and how they have interacted with each other in bringing different and changing cultural interpretations. The growth in cultural flows between the countries, despite historical antipathy, is creating a new cultural geography. An examination of a selected Japanese media text remade for television and its’ content related to the new cultural geography emerging in East Asia. The focus is initially on Japan whilst concomitantly using Korea and its’ more recent television media production of the selected text to delineate the new regional cultural geography. Of great importance in the process of the emergence of media and cultural ‘capital’ and a new cultural geography is the political change. Respective Government instigated media policy and regulations formally control the television industry in both Japan and Korea. The organisation of the Japanese broadcasting industry is summarised.

INTRODUCTION

Japan and Korea have made growth in cultural exchange from 1980, particularly since 1998 up to the present. The regional economic growth has enhanced the cultural flow in the geographic region as well as between the two countries. The rapid expansion of communication technology including broadcast and communication satellites, the internet and mobile telephones has conjointly accelerated the process. Media industries, principally film, television, popular music, anime and manga continue to play a major role in consolidating a new regional social network. This paper examines the changes in government regulations and cultural threads, which have led to the increase in cultural exchange and how they have interacted with each other in bringing different and changing cultural interpretations. The growth in cultural flows between the countries, despite historical antipathy, is creating a new cultural geography. The process of regional cultural evolution, in the latter part of the twentieth century has originated in Japan. One Japanese media product created from an original manga text for television has been selected and examined and its’ content related to the cultural matrix emerging in East Asia. The focus is initially on Japan whilst concomitantly using Korea and its’ more recent remade television media product to further delineate the new regional cultural geography.

The paper considers in part the re-making of one Japanese popular culture text from the manga Hana yori Dango, written by Kami o Yoko and released between 1992 and 2004 in Japan. The text was remade into a television anime in 1996, broadcasted by Asahi Television; then into an anime film in 1997 by the Toei film company. Due to its continuing popularity, it was remade into a television drama in 2005. A sequel followed in 2007 and in 2008 a pro-sequel. The original manga was remade into a Taiwanese television drama called Meteor Garden, using a Taiwanese cast for Taiwanese audiences initially in 2001 and again in 2006 and 2007 with ensuing Taiwanese productions(Lim
Currently a Filipino broadcast company is looking to acquire the licence for remaking _Hana yori Dango_ for a local audience. Another remade version of _Hana yori Dango_ was recently completed in Korea using Korean casts and Korean house production for 2009 and has just been released by the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS)(Hana yori Dango 2008). The original Japanese _manga_ has been translated into thirteen languages. Such remaking of popular culture texts into sequels and prequels across Asia is a creative, dynamic and powerful force, which I call the ‘soft power’ phenomenon and soft power has in turn created cultural threads and cultural capital.

The paper also illustrates the re-creation of the original text into different media forms. It determines the core transformations for audiences in Japan and Korea. Analysis of the elements retained, transformed and additional elements introduced with various forms of the original text into the differing media products. Edward Hall’s theory of cross cultural communication is applied to conceptualise the cultural transferences in the remaking process (Walker, Walker, and Schmitz 2003). An increasing number of remade products have been transferred pan-Asia. Since 1990; taking Fuji Television as a case, one hundred and fifty to two hundred Japanese television programs were sold and have been shown in East Asia. (Murakami 2005). More than five hundred Japanese television dramas have been shown across Asia (METI Report 2003). They have created “media capital” (Curtin 2004, 2003) in Asia and lifted what McGray has called “The Gross National Cool Product” (MacGray 2002), which in turn has contributed to Asian national economies. Many Japanese _manga_ have been remade into TV dramas, TV dramas have been remade into films, and films have been novelized into books and books have been remade into other media forms. These media forms have contributed to easing the boundary between Korea and Japan.

**HISTORICAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE JAPANESE AND KOREAN RELATIONSHIP**

Although Japan and Korea are neighbours in the South Asian region, and share Eastern cultures through historical contact with Chinese culture, Buddhism and the like historically a number of barriers have divided the two countries. Some of the barriers include The Japan Sea, separate written and spoken languages, frequent periods of political and military hostility, compounded by the fact that Korea is on the Asian mainland and was the obvious route for invasion of Japan by expansionist Chinese regimes in the past (Yasumoto 2008).

During the twentieth century, Korea discouraged friendly relations between Korea and Japan since Japan annexed Korea in 1910 and maintained occupation in Korea until 1945. At the end of Japanese imperial policies in 1945 and since then, residual ill feeling and the focus of the new Korea as a cold war “hot” conflict zone kept relations at a distance for decades. As a result, there was little interaction between Japanese and Korean media. The Koreans did not want to subjugate their cultural heritage to Japanese culture. However, at this time through to the present, the technology for trans-border electronic communication, for example, television and the internet has evolved at a rapid pace. With the introduction of new technologies, the programming industry was developing appealing formats such as TV drama for providing popular, mass entertainment to broadcast over the expanding electronic media. There was an improvement in relations becoming evident towards the end of the twentieth century. Notwithstanding the broader based picture, there was evidence of some mixed feelings for and against Japanese culture. In 1995, the Japanese Prime Minister Murayama released his statement ‘Apologies to Asian nation who suffered under the Japanese military’; this was a singularly important announcement.
from Japan and was an important precursor to the thawing of relations between Japan and its regional neighbors. The historical antipathy was to change at the end of the twentieth century when the Korean Government implemented a program of easing of previously imposed restrictions on the exchange of Korean and Japanese popular cultural material.

**VISIONARY CHANGES TO THE JAPANESE AND KOREAN RELATIONSHIP**

Kim Dae-jung, who later became the Korean president, was a visionary in his view of the future relationship between Korea and Japan. He was abducted by the Korean Central intelligence agency (KCIA) in 1973 during a visit to Japan, taken back to Korea, and then imprisoned. In his publication “金大中 Jail correspondence” written whilst he was in prison he has stated his three ‘han’s:

1. Opposed to adverse feelings towards the Japanese.
2. Against the use of military force.
3. To use a harmonious approach towards Japan

(Maeda 2007).

It is noted that Kim Dae-jung, as with the South African visionary Nelson Mandella was awarded a Nobel prize. The improvement in relations between Japan and Korea was facilitated under the presidency of Kim Dae-jung 金大中(1998-2003). He instigated four steps to open the Korean door for Japan, allowing the entry of Japanese Popular Culture into Korea, in 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2003/4(Ishii 2001; Maeda 2007). The first step resulted in an adverse reaction within Korea amongst the mass media, intellectuals and academia in Korea. There was hesitation in accepting this new open door policy. Kim Dae-jung in progressively opening the door between Korea and Japan and increasingly enabling a cultural flow, saw this as the way to improve the understanding of Koreans for things Japanese and conversely Japanese for things Korean. He was pragmatic appreciating that by 1995; eighty percent of Japanese TV anime had already penetrated into Korean society unofficially. The Korean Cultural Promotion research center reports on the findings from a survey within Japan with the question “Do you agree to the Korean Government Open Door Policy towards Japanese Popular Culture? The result was 50.3% positive, 23.7 % generally positive, 12.2 % no real view-matter of personal taste. This sample, with 86.2 percent of the sample not opposing the policy, strongly supports Kim Dae-jung’s vision and has enabled the cultural threads between Japan and Korea to strengthen and cultural exchange to grow(Maeda 2007).

Maeda states that a Korean SBS radio producer reports highly evaluated Japanese award films should be open to Korea, if the assessment of the content as being of ‘high’ quality internationally. We should not just read the article in the newspaper about the Japanese film. We should not read the article about Japanese pop music. We should listen to the music, this is strange phenomenon to keep this anti Japanese feelings in Korea. We should stop this. We have to do it now otherwise Korea delays its growth in economic competitive power. It is time now for Korean to continue with economic progress.

Turning then to the four steps implemented by the Korean government with the vision of Kim Dae-jung. Ishii (2004), Maeda (2006), Korean Cultural Tourist Bureau and Chosen Nippo (2003) instigated the four steps as follows:

**The first step - 1988 October 10th**

1. Movies & Videos
   
   Japan and Korea Co-production film
1.1. Japanese actors participation in Korean Film
1.2. Four Award films(Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Academy)
2. print publication
   Anime, Manga

The second step - 1999 September 10th
1. Movies & Videos
   1.1. 70 international Film festival awards.
   1.2. No age restricted film
   1.3. No anime for movie theatre
2. Music
   Singers less than 2000 seats (No Live, Record, video)

The Third Step - 2000 June 27th
1. Movies & Videos
   1.1. Restricted
       Films except 12-14 years under.
   1.2. No restriction for international
       Film festival awards films.
   1.3. Restricted
       Anime in the theatre, Only international film festival awards anime
2. Music
   Japanese music in Korean Accepted all albums except Japanese lyrics.
3. Games soft
   All game soft (PC games, On-line games)
   Except videogame using a video game machine.
4. Broadcast
   Sports, Documentary,
   Cable ,TV, Satellite Broadcast (keep the second step conditions)

The fourth step - 2004 September 16th /January 1st

September 16th
1. Movies & Videos
   Released all restrictions
2. Music
   CD, Tapes,
   Lyrics in Japanese.
3. Games soft
   Released all restrictions

January 1st
4. Broadcast
   Cable, Satellite:
   Life Information, educational programme, movie, Theatre anime (restricted
   Shown in Korea)
   All Japanese Lyrics, TV drama (restricted 12 years above),
   Co production TV drama,
* Entertainment programme(Variety, Talk show) not open
**Some restrictions remain-Entertainment programme (Variety, Talk show)
There was a gap, after the third step, between 2000-2004 where political events influenced the Korean President’s policy of opening the door of Korea to Japan. Primary issues being the Japanese history textbook, ownership of Takeshima Island and the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi’s visits to the Yasukuni Shrine.

**Japanese Media Inroads into Korea and the Korean Wave**

Japan already possessed a sophisticated and dynamic media industry. The South Korean government had been careful initially to prevent exposing the Korean media industry to more open competition from Japan. Notwithstanding the initial reticence of the Korean government in accepting Japanese media content, for distribution in Korea, some anime was screened, without government approval, in Korea before 1998 and with government approval after 2004. A greater range of content except anime was accepted and screened in theatres post 1998. The impact and success of Korean television dramas in Japan known as Kanryuu (Korean Wave) was initially a surprise to the Korean media industry. The well-known Korean drama ‘Winter Sonata’ with strong love story elements was broadcast in NHK and created cult status in Japan. NHK is historically known by orthodox mottos and concentrates on broadcast news, cultural and educational programming. Winter Sonata was the for runner of a number of Korean productions distributed and receiving acclaim in Japan. This ongoing outcome of media transfers fully confirmed the vision of Kim Dae-jung, some examples of media transfers from Japan to Korea are in Table 1.

**Japanese Content distributed in Korea (Adapted; Maeda, 2006)**

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<tr>
<td>TV Anime:</td>
<td>Films, TV</td>
<td>Films: TV</td>
<td>Films: Odoru, Daisoosa sen, Kaze no Tani no Naushika, Music: Chage &amp; Asuka Live</td>
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<tr>
<td>Astro Boy,</td>
<td>Hanabi, Seven</td>
<td>Dramas: Narayambushiko, Love letter, Ring, Tetsudoin, Shall we dance?</td>
<td>Manga: Tacchi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiger</td>
<td>Samurai, Rashomon, Colida, Kagemusha</td>
<td>Anime: Evangelism, Princess Mononoke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bam,</td>
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<td>Captain</td>
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<td>Harrock,</td>
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<td>Witches</td>
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<td>Sally,</td>
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<td>Candy</td>
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**Japanese Broadcasting Industry in a Regional Context**

Of great importance in the process of the emergence of media capital and a new cultural geography, despite the opportunities for piracy of media content, are the regional political changes. Government instigated media policy and regulations formally control the broadcasting industry in both Japan and Korea. Japanese regulations control the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) and the National Association of Commercial Broadcasting NAB broadcasting content. In 2003, the Broadcasting Ethics & Program Improvement Organization (BPO) was established.

The Japanese television broadcasting industry in Japan is very diverse. There are one hundred and twenty seven domestic television stations(NHK 2008). The five main ones are in Tokyo. The industry is comprised of two main broadcasting systems. One is the public broadcaster, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) and the other is the body of
commercial networks within NAB. NHK is Japan’s public broadcaster comprising NHK General television and NHK Educational television, three satellite services (NHK BS-1, NHK BS-2, and NHK Hi vision-High definition television). The United Kingdom’s British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio company was the model for the 1926 founding of NHK (Penn 2003). NAB consists of commercial broadcasting industries inclusive of networks and committees. All commercial broadcasters have to apply to and become a member of the NAB before they are authorised to broadcast. The primary function of NAB is to make regulation and policy controlling the content of television and radio programmes of the commercial broadcasters within government regulations. NAB audits the credibility of viewer’s ratings, make recommendations regarding programmes for specific age groups. NAB is a self-regulatory authority (Katayama 1999).

The function of BPO plays important roles in Japanese broadcasting media. They act as a mediator between the audience and NHK and NAB. Before 1969, NHK and NAB controlled the regulatory framework and policy. Historically as the association was formed with the two broadcasters, a need was seen to add a third party. BPO has to report audience opinion to NHK and NAB as well as ensuring that the rights and ethics of content fall within government policy (Shimizu 2007).

Before the late 1990s the Korean government legislation restricted the exportation and importation of television, music and film productions; however, from the late 1990s government legislation and technological changes were dynamic. Taking the case of Korea and Japan as an example shows how the lifting of some restrictions after 1990 has improved media transfers. In 1998, Japanese films were officially exported to Korea for the first time. Japanese pop musicians performed in Korea with audience restrictions to 2000 people (Ishii 2001; Maeda 2007). In 2004, both the Korean and Japanese markets were further opened with regard to importation of popular culture productions and both governments began to support co-productions with funding and legislation (Ishii 2001; Maeda 2007). Before the four-step Korean Government policies Korea was very restrictive to the importation of Japanese media products and so Korea was producing ‘unofficial’ video compact discs and the remade versions were based on the Japanese television drama stories (Yasuki 2005). This ‘unofficial’ video compact disc production accelerated in the region to the detriment of copyright protection. Terry Flew notes “Media Policy has been central to the development of media in all of its forms. Government policy institutions regulate the ownership, production and distribution of media, and seek to manage and shape cultural practices in order to direct media institutions towards, particular policy goals” (Flew 2007):171.

**EXTERNAL INTEREST IN JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE—COOL JAPAN**

The word ‘Cool’ in respect to the media industry first appeared in the Japanese media in 2002. Douglas McGray, an American journalist wrote his thesis called “Japan’s Gross National Cool” and published in the ‘Foreign Policy’ magazine, An American Diplomat journal in 2002. (McGray 2002) and the following year, the translation of his article Cool Japan Sekai o Kappo suru Nippon no kakko yosa was published in Chuokoron. He stated that the national power is normally measured by gross national product (GNP) and gross domestic product (GDP). Douglas McGray has created the initialism GNC ‘Gross National Cool’ measured by ‘Cool’ countries like Japan known for their pop culture products (Sugiyama 2006). In another words, Japan is known as GNP Number Two, but GNC Number One. Popular culture content from Japan is now penetrating into other countries. Sugiyama notes the article on Japan “Cool Japan, Japan as Pop Super Power” in
the French Newspaper ‘Le Monde’. He argues that Japan conveys super power influence though popular culture.

The image of Japan, viewed from outside Japan, is now far more complex than the vision of the nineteen sixties when the contemporary vision of Japan at that time was represented by the stereo-types of temples, the Imperial Palace, ancient castles, kimono, samurai swords, Mt. Fuji and the like. Japan today still rightly retains the iconic visions but a view now reinforced by quality products and services; as evidenced by cameras, computers, a plethora of electronic devices, and the high speed train pioneer Shinkansen and many other outstanding examples of technical progress from the nineteen sixties through to the present time. Japan is further evolving with ‘GNC’ and ‘soft power’. The Japanese parliament Diet recognises the importance of ‘GNC’ noting, "We will also formulate 'The Japanese Cultural Industry Strategy', which will enhance the competitiveness of areas that represent the good traits and uniqueness of Japan ... and present them to the world"(Contents Sangyo Kokusai Senryaku Kenkyuukai Gijiroku 2006).

**AN ICONIC REMADE JAPANESE MANGA PRODUCT**

The changes in government regulations, particularly in Japan and Korea have enabled texts in both the original form and remade forms and formats to cross national boundaries within the respective legal frameworks. Some texts were remade within Japan and others were remade in other Asian countries such as Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore China. Perhaps one of the strongest examples of the remaking of Japanese popular culture texts crossing the national divides is the case of the manga *Hana yori Dango* (1992-2004), a love comedy in the genre of Girls manga by KamioYoko. The plot centres on a simple and poor teenage girl, who goes to a high school for wealthy people, forced upon her by her parents. The high school is dominated by a gang of handsome but arrogant students called F4 (Flowers four), who are heirs of the most influential families in Tokyo. In the beginning, the gang leader, Domyoji hates Tsukasa that he makes everyone in the high school play tricks on her, however she gradually gains Domyoji’s respect and later he falls in love with her. The lovers end up getting together after going through a series of painful challenges.

*Manga* can create ideal characters, able to express movements and emotions not so readily translated into traditional television productions. Harada points out that *Manga* can be artistically cute yet mentally challenging, funny yet serious, innocent yet lecherous, wholesome yet sensual, tender yet violent, or display these qualities simultaneously. *Manga* and *anime* are aiming to fuse reality and fantasy that have something to offer to everybody” (Harada 2007). *Manga* literacy and image alliance have become global beyond the language level. Pictures principally replace writing in *manga*.

In studying the original manga of *Hana yori Dango* one needs to understand the formatting used. This *manga* does not have page numbering which makes references more difficult to identify. Each element of the story is located in a particular space. The space for the particular scene is known as *koma*. Script is contained within a bubble, *fukidshi* in approximate space to a particular scene. The story’s script relating to a particular scene is written inside of *fukidshi*, by using different writing style, size. *Onyu* onomatopoeia, mimetic words are frequently used to express an emphatic feeling such as being sad, happy, surprise, anger, doubt. The *manpu* using ‘marked’ artistic style expresses feelings, nervousness, embarrassment etc. Using such techniques brings the reader to the reality of life in a fantasy presentation. *Han yori Dango* uses more of these stylistic features than other *manga*.
Each character in the story represents a quite strong image of a new style of youth. Verbal and non-verbal expressions are the miniature social circle of the current society. When the Japanese economic bubble bursts, in 1990 many Japanese unique popular culture appeared into the Japanese society, ‘Chapatsu’ boom, dyed blond hair fashion everywhere on the street, Purikura (print club photo shot), Kogyaru (dressing Lorita, Gothic fashions) wearing Atsuzoko Boom, long thick heal boots, wearing cosplay maid clothes and etc. Overseas Studies to US and Europe had a prestigious status and became quite popular in the Japanese society. Many episodes centre around these unique street cultures. *Hana yori Dango* is a strong example that the many elements of the texts are linked with the social phenomenon in Japan. These element were transformed into Korea and created another society.

*Hana yori Dango* was remade into a TV anime in 1996, broadcast by Asahi TV. It was then remade as an anime film in 1997 by the Toei film company. Due to its popularity, it was remade into a television drama in 2005. A second series, *Hana yori Dango 2*, was made in 2007. In 2008 it was remade as a TV drama *Hana yori Dango: Final*. The original *Hana yori Dango* was remade into a Taiwanese TV drama called Meteor Garden, using a Taiwanese cast for a Taiwanese audience, initially in 2001 and again in 2006 and 2007. Currently a Filipino broadcast company is looking to acquire the rights for remaking *Hana yori Dango* for a local audience. A Korean remaking of *Hana yori Dango* in Korea is using Korean casts and Korean house production for 2009. The Chinese company Funan BSTVC has made a Chinese version of *Hana yori Dango* allowed for computer viewing but not for broadcasting. Such remaking of popular culture texts into sequels and prequels across Asia is a creative, dynamic and powerful force, which I call the ‘soft power phenomenon’ and provides strong evidence of the expansion of cultural exchange and the reinforcement of cultural threads.

*Hana yori Dango* crossed cultural boundaries from its Japanese source, initially into Taiwan in 2001 and later into Korea in 2008. The reason for the gap in time between the transfer to Taiwan and later to Korea will be the subject of further study. Cultural proximity, with the impact of global migration may, or may not, be regionally based however, it may be appreciated that in East Asia cultural proximity has a significant regional aspect to it. Hall proposed that the most basic goal of communication, presupposing that the communication is allowed, was “transmitting meaning as closely as possible to the way it was conceived”. He posited an ideal communication process where messages travel without distortion between a sender and a receiver. It may be useful to review the cultural communication model of Walker, Walker & Schmitz adapting Hall (Hall 1990). The ideal communication process would be simple. Communication and inter-reaction in real life situations is very complex. One often has to consider the impact of the cultural frames of the sender and the receiver, especially if these are different. Walker *et al* argue that our cultural frames act as the perceptual window or filter through which individuals define them, others and the world. An individual’s cultural frame is informed by such variables as language, style, stereotypes, etiquette, socialisation, value orientations, non-verbal languages, etc.

When senders and receivers have mismatched cultural frames, this results in messages contaminated by mismatched expectations, misinterpreted messages, feedback, etc. and ‘noise’ – meaningless or distorted signals which place a burden on communication. Viewers view television programs subliminally using the same process. If the viewer perceives that the program’s cultural frame is incongruent with their personal frame they would be aware of the “noise,” rendering the program less satisfactory and making it more difficult to appreciate and empathise with the characters in *Hana yori*
During the remaking process from one culture to another, the element changes to suit the targeted audience; by example, genre, format, language, plot, main characters, expression of emotion, verbal and non-verbal expression.

An analysis of an audience segment in Japan of Hana yori Dango was carried out. The sample size was 429 Japanese blogs with inputs from 426 females and three males across a spectrum of ages from ten to eighty-four years. The survey was carried out from August 31st 2007 to September 1st 2007 using TBS blog. 70% of the viewers are in the low teens, 20% are in the twenties and thirties and the balance are in the forties to the eighties. One concludes from the blogs that the primary audience for the television representation of Hana yori Dango is female.

Hana yori Dango was been released in Korea by KBS at the beginning of 2009 for TV presentation and the spin off DVD’s very recently. Table 2, which follows, illustrates some of the changes in the remaking from the original manga format of Hana yori Dango to TV drama.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Manga</th>
<th>Japanese Drama (TBS)</th>
<th>Korean Drama KBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Love Comedy</td>
<td>Trendy drama</td>
<td>Love Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation of main characters</td>
<td>Modern, passionate, physically strong, breaking the female mould</td>
<td>Trendy, modern, independent, cute</td>
<td>Fashionable, modern, independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressions of gender</td>
<td>Promoting new style</td>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressions of emotion</td>
<td>Non verbal, pictorial</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal expression</td>
<td>Swear words</td>
<td>Irony</td>
<td>Irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story tension</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story remake</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Additional scene in Japanese context</td>
<td>Scene omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture transference</td>
<td>Visual representation</td>
<td>Culture representation through some Proverbs</td>
<td>Meaning loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Early teen female</td>
<td>Teen to adult female</td>
<td>Teen to adult female and male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**

**CONCLUSION**

The growth of media and cultural capital emanating from Japan and Korea has been restrained because of historical antipathy between Korea and Japan. This antipathy against Japan has reduced over time because of regional vision, positive leadership and reinforcement and understanding of the positive regional cultural aspects and a willingness to embrace that that is good. The Japanese Prime Minister Murayama’s repent for Japan’s military excesses and more importantly the vision, commitment to change and the courage of the Korean past president Kim Dae-jung has dramatically changed the regional cultural
landscape. The changes in Korean media controls championed by Kim Dae-jung has enabled Korea to overcome the inherent concern of Japanese media domination derived from the Japanese mature and diverse media resources. This change has also enabled Korea to be able and confident in its own media industry as evidenced by the sale and success of its media and allied spin off products into Japan through the phenomena of Kanryuu.

Korea has exhibited the courage to embrace change and in turn, Japan has more recently begun to appreciate the intrinsic value of its culture. Japan is further evolving with GNC and soft power. The Japanese parliament Diet is now recognises the importance of GNC noting, "We will also formulate 'The Japanese Cultural Industry Strategy', which will enhance the competitiveness of areas that represent the good traits and uniqueness of Japan.

Hall proposed that the most basic goal of communication, presupposing that the communication is allowed, was “transmitting meaning as closely as possible to the way it was conceived”. The regional political benefit deriving from an anthropologist’s appreciation of one of the essences of human nature would seem now to be permeating East Asian societies to the regional benefit.

The industry of remaking from original texts thrives in Japan and has both domestic and international appeal. Hana yori Dango, is an iconic example of an original manga text that has been transformed into other formats and crossed the cultural divide. The Kanryuu also illustrates the potential for cultural inroads into Japan from Korea and the transfers of popular culture transcends historical constraints and bodes well for regional harmony and the evolution of a new cultural geography.

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